

Methodist Hospital Foundation's Crystal Ball 2006

## *Honoring Charles and Ruth Gilb*

"What you do in this life comes back to you. It doesn't matter whether anybody knows about it or not."

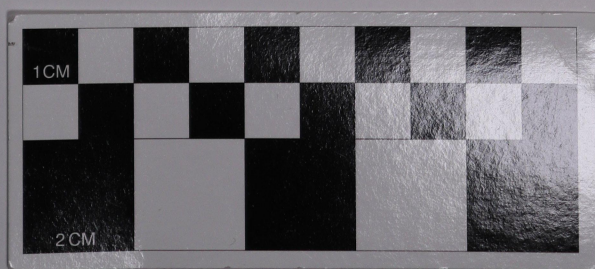
Charles and Ruth Gilb live this adage, and they taught their three children, Denice, Michael and Valerie to live by this principle as well. Charles and Ruth give their all to everything they do. And it shows.

Their story begins in the Northwest. Ruth, a native of Montana, and Charles, raised in Idaho, met in 1946 at the University of Idaho at Moscow. Charles had just returned from serving as a Marine in the Pacific arena during WWII. Charles, a Beta Theta Pi, was majoring in Business Administration and Ruth studied English Drama. A year and a half after they met in a Zoology lab, they married in Havre, Montana. Two years later they packed up and moved to Southern California; Pasadena to be exact.

In the 1950's, Charles began working for a bag company, supplying produce companies on the Los Angeles market with their burlap. Ruth worked for Sears. After the birth of their eldest daughter, Denice, Charles signed on with the George R. Craig Company, a produce brokerage firm specializing in potatoes and onions. By the end of the decade, he bought the company and renamed it the Charles E. Gilb Company, which he still runs today. Ruth left Sears to be at home with her growing family, adding a son, Michael, and daughter, Valerie.

In 1960, the Gilb family moved to Arcadia. Charles worked hard building his reputation as the "Potato King" while Ruth kept busy with the children. She was an active member of the Mayfield and Flintridge Prep Parent-Teacher Associations as well as sitting on the Board of the St. Rita's Guild and Mt. Alverno Guild. Charles spent many a long hot summer in Bakersfield, selling potatoes from the packing shed. During this time he served as President of the Produce Brokers and Dealers Association and was also on the Board of Directors of two national produce marketing organizations. In the late 60's, the Gilbs discovered their love of travel with a European vacation. The following year, they cruised the Pacific to New Zealand and Australia and have been globetrotting ever since. In 1969, Charles was honored by the City of Hope as their "Man of the Year."

As the children graduated from high school in the 1970's and went on to college, Ruth and Charles





found time for other activities. Ruth opened the RVG Collection, a women's dress shop which she ran for nearly 20 years. And Charles tried his hand at politics. His first try at city council was not successful, but he didn't give up. Two years later, he ran again and made it. He was elected four times to the Arcadia City Council, serving as mayor each term. He also was awarded the Silver Beaver Award from the San Gabriel Council of Boy Scouts. Ruth also was deeply involved with the city and community, serving as President of the Arcadia Tournament of Roses, sitting on the Board of Methodist Hospital Foundation, and being an active member in Altrusa International Inc. of Arcadia, National Charity League and the Assistance League of Pasadena.

Between work, public service and traveling, the Gilbs positive impact never ceased. Tireless in their efforts to give back to the community, their involvement was far-reaching. Ruth served on the Los Angeles County Commission for Children's Services and was a long-time board member of the Arcadia Welfare and Thrift Shop. Charles chaired the League of California Cities, presided over the Independent Cities Association of Los Angeles County, served as a Los Angeles County Fire Commissioner and was President of the Arcadia Tournament of Roses. But they always found time for family and friends no matter how busy a schedule they kept.

Ruth and Charles have been named individually, and as a couple as Arcadia's "Citizen of the Year". Their energy is limitless.

"We both are very hard workers," Ruth says. "It is our obligation to keep our community strong and vibrant."

Ruth recalls visiting with Mother Teresa in Calcutta, India and being struck by the sight of well-to-do Indian families cleaning the floors of the orphanage in the slums. This only affirmed their belief in giving back to the community and to the world. With that in mind, Ruth and Charles have made sure that the history and heritage of our community is not lost with their generous support of the Ruth and Charles Gilb Arcadia Historical Museum.

No matter where the Gilbs travel, or how hectic their schedule gets, they both believe there is no place like home. And home is Arcadia.

Their civic pride is also seen in their incredible support of Methodist Hospital. The Gilbs have endowed three patient rooms on the third floor of the Berger Tower, as well as their current support of a major expansion of our hospital.

Ruth takes special pride in the many health programs at the Senior Center which are provided by the hospital. "Just as each and every one of us is linked, so are the vast programs of Methodist Hospital and the community," she said. "By supporting one, you support them all and that is a responsibility that all citizens must share."

Charles believes that being involved is just a natural part of living. "You've got to give something back," he states. "It's needed and somebody's got to do it. That's just the way it is."

And that is just the way Charles and Ruth Gilb are.

